

Facts About...

HIV/AIDS in People of Color

HIV/AIDS Epidemiology Program
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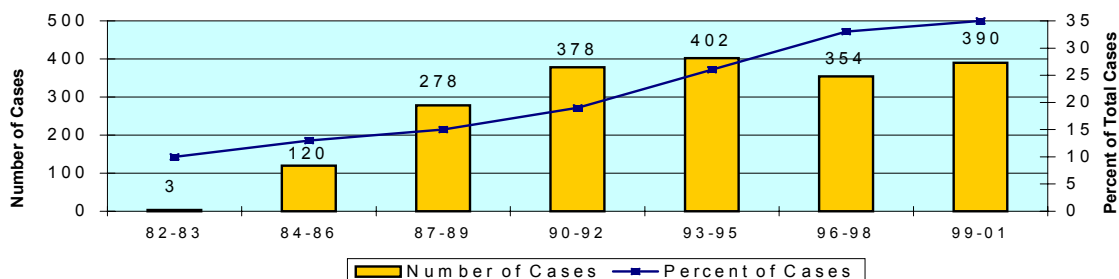


SUMMARY: In Seattle-King County, as in the U.S. as a whole, epidemiologic data indicate that HIV and AIDS are disproportionately affecting African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and persons of Hispanic ethnicity compared to Whites or Asian/Pacific Islanders. The racial disparity is even greater among women compared to men.

STATUS AND TRENDS IN HIV/AIDS CASES, WITH POPULATION SIZES:

- Of the total of 8,400 estimated King County residents currently living with HIV infection (including those with AIDS), an estimated 2,250 (27%) are people of color.
- By race/ethnicity the estimated number of HIV-infected persons includes roughly: 6,150 (73%) non-Hispanic Whites; 1,240 (15%) non-Hispanic African Americans; 690 (8%) persons of Hispanic ethnicity; 180 (2%) Asian/Pacific Islanders; and 140 (2%) American Indian/Alaska Natives.
- As shown below in the figure below, the percent of HIV/AIDS cases among people of color has risen steadily since the early years of the epidemic in King County, going from 13% of cases in 1984-86 to 26% in 1993-95 and 35% in 1999-2001. This trend has been most evident among African Americans and Hispanic persons.

Number & Percent of New HIV/AIDS Diagnosis in People of Color, King County, 1982-2001



- Population-based rates in recent years (1999-2001) demonstrate the epidemic's disproportionate impact on persons of color, with rates in African Americans, Hispanics and American Indian/Alaska Natives being 2 to 5 times that of Whites in King County. HIV/AIDS rates in Asians/Pacific Islanders, however, continue to be significantly lower than Whites, as shown in the table below.

	King County Estimated population In 2000		No. King County HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed 1999- 01		Average Annualized Rate per 100,000 population	Rate Ratio (Rates compared to white rate)
	No.	(%)	No.	(%)		
White, not Hispanic	1,327,891	(76.4)	704	(64)	17.7	--
African American, not Hispanic	95,597	(5.5)	230	(21)	80.1	4.5
Hispanic	95,242	(5.5)	120	(11)	42.0	2.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	203,435	(11.7)	29	(3)	4.8	0.3
Am Indian/ Alaskan Native	14,869	(0.9)	13	(1)	29.1	1.6
Total	1,737,034	(100)	1,104	(100)	18.8	--

- The racial disparities are greatest among African American women compared to other race/ethnicities. In 1999-2001, the average annual rate of HIV/AIDS for African American females (53 per 100,000) in King County was 24 times that for White females (2.2 per 100,000). Rates in American Indian / Alaskan Native (13) and Hispanic women (12) were also substantially higher than in White women but these comparisons must be interpreted with caution due to small numbers of cases in American Indian and Hispanic women.
- More African American and Am Indian/AK Native (AI/AN) men and women acquire HIV from injection drug use compared to other groups as shown in the table below. Hispanic women with HIV are far less likely to be drug injectors (5% of cases) compared to White (29%) or African American women (21%). The percent of persons living with HIV/AIDS by race for selected HIV exposure categories for males and females is given below (King County HIV/AIDS case data reported through 6/02).

MALES (N = 4,509)	White	Af Am	Hisp	Asian	AI/AN
Gay/bisexual non-injectors	83%	51%	71%	75%	51%
Gay/bisexual drug injectors	10%	7%	6%	4%	33%
Heterosexual drug injectors	3%	14%	10%	4%	13%
Heterosexual at-risk partner, non-injectors	1%	13%	3%	3%	2%
Undetermined or not reported	2%	15%	9%	11%	2%
FEMALES (N = 454)					
Drug injectors	29%	21%	5%	0%	67%
Heterosexual at-risk partner, non-injectors	46%	44%	59%	50%	14%
Transfusion/blood product or other known risk	2%	4%	3%	8%	0%
Perinatal exposure	3%	4%	5%	8%	0%
Undetermined or not reported	20%	27%	27%	33%	19%

HIV PREVALENCE:

- Seroprevalence data from unlinked surveys of King County Harborview Sexually-transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic patients indicate higher rates of HIV in heterosexual African American and Hispanic men and women compared to Whites. In STD Clinic surveys conducted in 2000-01, 0.2% of heterosexual Whites (n=1504) tested HIV positive compared to 0.7% of African Americans (n=562) and 0.7% of Hispanics (n=146). No heterosexual Asian/Pacific Islanders (n=746) since 1990 or American Indian/Alaska Natives (n=265) since 1992 have tested HIV positive in this survey.
- Seroprevalence data from unlinked surveys conducted in 1997 to 1999 (when the survey ended) in drug treatment facilities located in King County shows significantly lower HIV prevalence rates among Whites (1.0%) entering drug treatment compared to African Americans (3.2%) or American Indians/Alaska Natives (6.2%). None of the 106 Asian/Pacific Islanders tested in this survey since 1991 were HIV positive.
- In surveys of women giving birth in King County from 1/89 to 5/95 (when the survey ended), the percent of African American women testing HIV positive (0.3%) was 10 times the rate for white women (0.03%).

OTHER MEASURES OF RISK:

- Information about other STDs is useful in evaluating the risk of HIV transmission. King County STD data indicate much higher rates of gonorrhea, syphilis, and chlamydia among African Americans compared to Whites. For example, in 1998 the rate of gonorrhea in African American men was 9 times higher than the rate in Whites, and among African American women 22 times higher. Compared to Whites, 1998 gonorrhea rates were also significantly higher among American Indians/Alaska Natives and Hispanics, but lower among Asian/Pacific Islanders.
- Among adolescents, the birth rate can also be used as an indication of unprotected sexual activity and therefore risk of HIV infection. King County birth rates in 1997-99 for women 15 to 17 years of age were highest among Hispanics (49 per 1,000), American Indians/Alaska Natives (52 per 1,000), and African Americans (32 per 1,000) and lowest among Whites (11 per 1,000) and Asian/Pacific Islanders (12 per 1,000).